

REMARKS

Claims 1-4 and 6-19 are present in this application. Claims 1, 2, and 13 are independent. Claim 5 has been canceled.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 2-4, 6, 8, 10, and 12 contain allowable subject matter. (Note that the inclusion of claim 2 as being allowable had been verified with the Examiner).

Claim 2 has been rewritten into independent form. Thus, Applicants submit that claims 2-4, 6, 8, 10, and 12 are allowable.

Claim Rejection – 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1, 5, 7, 9, 13-19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,317,345 (Ueki). Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate subject matter from allowable claim 2, as well as claims 5 and 7. Claim 13 has been amended. Applicants request reconsideration of the claims as amended.

Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended to include elements from claim 2 of “an interrupt commanding means” for giving an order of a job interrupt, and “an interrupt job monitoring means” for monitoring the status of the interrupting job directed by the interrupt command means, as well as the feature of “if an interrupting job is directed by the interrupt command

means before elapse of the predetermined period, the interrupting job is preferentially performed.” Applicants submit that Ueki fails to teach or suggest each and every element of claim 1 as amended.

Claim 13

Claim 13 is directed to embodiments of an image processing apparatus including among other things, “an image information erasing means for erasing the image information stored in the image information storage means,” and “a time slot manager means for determining time slots as time periods in which the image information erasing means is scheduled to be operated.”

The Office Action relies on a section at col. 6, lines 26-44 for teaching the claimed means for managing time slots. The section at col. 6 describes Fig. 6. In particular, Fig. 6 in pertinent part is described as showing an I/O driver which outputs a control signal to a cell erase controller 57 in accordance with a command of the MPU 71, and that reference numeral 75 designates a timer returning a timer count up (carry) signal to the MPU 71 when a predetermined time is passed after a time set value is loaded from the MPU 71 and counting is started.

Ueki discloses a cell erasing process in Fig. 7 (described at column 7). According to Fig. 7, an optional command to erase a cell can be included in a print command issued from a host computer 50. If a command to erase is contained in the print command, a cell is erased in advance of reception of image data (steps n4, n5; col. 7, lines 11 – 16). Also, in a later step when a printing process is completed, the MPU 71 sets a timer at N and then the timer is started. When time N has passed, the MPU 71 issues a command for the cell eraser 57 to erase the cell through

the I/O driver 72 (steps n13 to n16; col. 7, lines 24-30). The time N can be determined as an appropriate time, may be set to 0, or a command to erase the cell can be contained in a printing command (col. 7, lines 30-54).

Ueki appears to teach a predetermined time period that occurs after completion of a printing process. Unlike Ueki, the claimed image processing device includes a time slot manager that determines the time slots in which erasing is scheduled to be operated. Thus, claim 13 has been amended to include:

a time slot manager means for determining time slots as time periods in
which the image information erasing means is scheduled to be operated.

Applicants request that the rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claim Rejection – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 11 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ueki in view of U.S. Patent 5,791,790 (Bender). Claim 11 depends from claim 1. Thus, at least for the reasons above for claim 1, Applicants submit that claim 11 is patentable as well.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendment, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Robert W. Downs (Reg. No.

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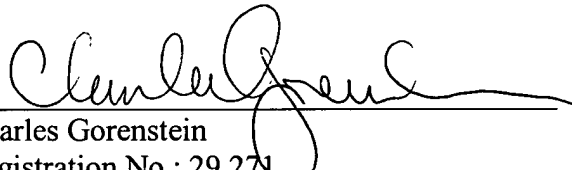
Docket No.: 1152-0289P

48,222) at the telephone number of (703) 205-8000, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: January 12, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

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